

The Blessed Advantages
O F
Peace and Peace-makers.

I N A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at
The Savoy in London

U P O N
The Fifth of St. Matthew ;

*Ver. IX. Blessed are the Peace-makers, for
they shall be called the Children of God.*

By ANTHONY HORNECK, D.D.
Late Preacher at the *Savoy*.

L O N D O N,
Printed for B. Aylmer at the *Three Pigeons*
against the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhill*, 1697.

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The Bookfeller's
ADVERTISEMENT.

THE *Late Worthby and Pious Doctor Anthony Horneck, the Author of this seasonable Discourse, hath left behind him fairly Writ, many Excellent Sermons upon most Practical Subjects in Divinity, particularly on all our Blessed Saviour's Sermon on the Mount; contained in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel; having been preached*

To the Reader.

to his Beloved People at the Savoy with great Approbation; which will be Printed with all convenient Speed by the Consent of his Widow. Fifteen Sermons, being the first Volume, upon part of the said Fifth Chapter (of which this is one) is now in the Press. But for the Seasonableness upon the happy Conclusion of the Peace, 'twas thought convenient to publish this alone.

B. A.

St. Matth. Ch. V. Ver. 9.

*Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they
shall be called the Children of God.*

AS in this divine Sermon of our Saviour, Men and Women are pronounced blessed and happy, with respect to things which the dull sensual World spies no felicity in ; or as here, those are counted happy whom the World counts miserable, and those miserable whom the world counts happy ; so it fares with the persons mention'd in the words before you, and the Blessedness which attends them ; the world, you know, magnifies great Generals, and Soldiers, and Martial Men who can fight well, and are very skilfull in besieging Towns, and in scaling Walls, in bombarding Castles, and surprizing Forts, and defeating Armies, and slaying Men ; and he, that with *Saul hath kill'd his thousands*, and with *David his ten thousands*, is cry'd up, and the Bells ring at his entrance into a conquer'd Town, all sing his Praises, Flowers of Rhetorick and Applause are strow'd in his way, publick Intelligences are fill'd with his Commendations ; and who so

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much talk'd of, as the man who is very expert in making, maintaining, and managing a War.

Our blessed Master over-looks all these partial verdicts of the World, and knowing that Nature, and Vice, and Profit, and Honour, Ambition and Lust are enough to inspire a man with Courage and Wisdom to fight, and to cause Disorders and Disturbances among Men, instead of commending Men, who are skilfull in making War, set a peculiar mark of favour on those who are skilfull in making Peace in the words I have read to you, *Blessed are the Peace-makers for they shall be called the Children of God.*

Blessed are the Peace-makers; what? All Peace-makers? Then Turks, and Infidels, Heathens, and Pagans, and the most licentious of Christian Princes do all come into the number of the blessed, and all must be Children of God. For there is no Prince, though never so great a Tyrant, though he hath spilt Blood like Water in his Conquests, though he hath made no more of destroying mens Lives, than *Tarquinius* did of taking off the heads of Poppies, or *Domitian* of killing Flies, yet makes Peace sometimes, and tired with the Toyl and Fatigue of the War, concludes a Truce at last with his Enemy; and what? Do all these come into the society of the blessed?

To

To give you light into this affair, I shall enquire,

I. Who these Peace-makers are that are pronounced blessed here.

II. I shall examine the reasons of the supposition, or the thing supposed and implied here, that those who have an aversion from this Peace-making, cannot be blessed.

III. I shall take the blessedness of these Peace-makers into consideration, and shew how, and upon what account they are, and shall be call'd the Children of God.

I. Who these Peace-makers are, that are said to be blessed here.

The word in the Original is *εἰρηνοποιοί*, which as Interpreters observe in Greek Authors signifies and denotes strictly those who make or procure Peace among Persons who disagree, and unite those who are at variance, but in Scripture the expression is of a larger extent, and includes a great deal more than a bare reconciling of Enemies, and the persons here aimed at are as follows.

1. Such as do make Peace with God and with their Consciences. To this purpose is the exhortation, *Job XXI. 22. Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at Peace, and great good shall come unto thee :*

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And from this Peace with God, arises that *Peace in believing*, we read of *Rom. XV. 13.* Man naturally is at Enmity with God, *Rom. V. 10.* to be sure, an Enemy of the Cross of Christ, for the Law of the Cross is directly opposite to the Principles and Dictates of sinfull Flesh, *Phil. III. 18.* and this Enmity still grows greater and greater, as corrupt nature is improved or abused into more corrupt practices, and from hence flows Man's misery. So that to be happy, a Man must be at Peace with God, which is a Maxim so natural, that Heathens do not think themselves safe without appeasing their angry Deities, and this puts them upon offering Sacrifices to them. But this doth not take with the true God, who delights not in burnt-offerings. The Sacrifices of God, which unite the Soul to him, and establish a Peace betwixt God and the Sinner, are a broken and a contrite Heart, and laying aside voluntarily and deliberately, and from a sense of the madness of the attempt, even of resisting and clashing with an Omnipotent Being, those things which God professes and declares his Hatred and Abhorrency of, and a chearfull Compliance with his revealed Will ; and you all know that the things he hates are our sinfull customs, practices and inclinations, for *your iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God*

God, and your sins have hid his Face from you, saith God, *Isa. LIX. 2.*

To be at Peace with God, a man must be at war with his sinfull Inclinations. To live in Peace with these, is to fall out with God, and the longer we maintain Friendship and Familiarity with these, the greater becomes the distance betwixt God and our Souls, the breach is still made wider, till we sin away at last all hopes of Reconciliation; where the Soul hath any reasonable assurance that God is at Peace with her, there Joy, and Gladness, and Serenity flows naturally into her Bosom, and that is the Peace of Conscience *St. Paul* speaks of, *Rom. XIV. 17.* And indeed there are no persons more likely to be successful in making Peace among Men, than those who first make Peace with God, and with their own Consciences:

2. Such as make it their business to live peaceably in humane Societies, and seek to maintain that Peace, which either Nature, or Religion, or Friendship, or Neighbourhood have settled among Men, with whom we live; and concerning this sort of Peace-making, *St. Paul* speaks, *Rom. XII. 18. If it be possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.* To maintain Peace, is part of Peace-making, for this is to make that Peace which is begun, and which we find settled in our hands to
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continue and flourish; in a word, to preserve it, and according to the old saying, *Non minor est virtus, &c.* It is as great a Vertue to preserve the good thing which we have purchas'd, as to purchase it; and while we behave our selves inoffensively, unblameably, and keep a Conscience void of offence toward God and Man, we take the readiest way to live peaceably. It's granted, that the most inoffensive Actions, nay even Acts of Duty and Devotion may stir up the wrath and fury of cholerick and prejudiced men, as we see the Apostles by preaching the Gospel, and attempting to reclaim men from their Vices, and telling them their Duty, rais'd all the World against themselves; but this is not our fault, as long as we give no just occasion to men to quarrel with us, or give no just offence; while we are ready to do good offices, do by others as we would have others do by us, and in our Discourses and Behaviour observe the rules of Modesty, Decency, Sobriety, and Charity; if after all, men will speak ill of us, and be angry, because we will not run out with them into excess of riot, as it seems those did St. Peter speaks of, *1 Pet. IV. 4.* We have discharged a good Conscience, and may comfort our selves with this, That we have given no just occasion to break the Peace.

3. And

3. And here comes in the stricter signification of the word, such as from a sense of Christian Love and Charity endeavour to reconcile disagreeing Persons, and Neighbours, and their fellow Christians that are at variance: And concerning this peace-making, St. Paul gives this grave and serious Admonition, 1 Cor. VI. 5, 6. *I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no not one that is able to judge between his Brethren. But Brother goes to Law with Brother.* And this must needs be his meaning in that other Exhortation, Rom. XIV. 9. where he bids us *follow after the things which make for Peace.* And indeed, where there is true Christian Compassion, a man will not only be ready to run to make up differences, when he is entreated, but of his own accord, and before he be entreated, especially, where either Friendship and a long Acquaintance, or some near Relation gives the Invitation. It was barbarous language of Cain, Gen. IV. 9. *Am I my Brother's keeper.* Such a word must not drop from the Hearts and Mouths of those who are adjured by Bowels of Mercy, not to look every one on his own things, but every man also on the things of his Neighbours, as all Christians are, Phil. II. 4. The common laws of humane societies, require this Peace-making, much more the Laws of Christianity; and since
we

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we are bound to love our Neighbours as our selves, how is it possible to obey that Law, without endeavouring to soder and join the clashing and dis-jointed Members of Christ's mystical body; in doing so we love our Neighbours as our selves, even in endeavouring to keep others from disagreeing, as we would keep our selves from being at variance with others. *How good and how pleasant a thing is it for Brethren to dwell together in Unity; it is like the precious ointment that ran down from Aaron's head into his Beard, and so on to the skirts of his cloathing, saith the Royal Psalmist, Psal. CXXXIII. 1, 2.* As Christians we are all Brethren, and then it must be our Duty to see the Beauty, Order and Harmony of that brotherly society preserved, which is impossible to be done, without actual and personal endeavours of reconciling those who are at difference, and this argument *Moses* made use of, when he saw two *Israelites* striving together, and would have set at one, *Why do you wrong one to another, seeing ye are Brethren?* Act. VII. 26.

4. Such as endeavour to make others like themselves, and do instill this Christian Principle of reconciling Persons, that quarrel and live in Enmity, into others. This is still making Peace, when we labour to make others enamour'd with this duty

duty of Peace-making, which is done either by Exhortation or Entreaty, or Representing to others the Nobleness, Excellency, and Profitableness of this peaceable and peace-making Temper. It's natural for men to endeavour to make others of the same Temper and Principles with our selves, which is the reason that men of all Persuasions do what they can to make Profelytes.

A truly good man cannot forbear saying with *St. Paul*, *I wish that all men were even as my self*, 1 Cor. VII. 7. I mean with respect to the good things the Grace of God hath infused into him: And as no man can be sincerely good, without endeavouring to unite, and reconcile his disagreeing Neighbours, so that Goodness will farther prompt him to bespeak those of his Acquaintance in *St. Paul's* language, *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them that walk so, as you have us for ensamples*, Philip. III. 17.

And from hence it will be an easie matter to give a just answer to the Objection I propos'd at first; whether all Peace-makers are indifferently concerned in the blessedness of the Text; It's plain from hence, that not every one that makes Peace either by force, or of necessity, or for profit and interest, or being tired with a long and tedious War. Not every one of these comes into the number of those blessed men.

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men. All the four Qualifications I have mentioned are requisite to entitle a man to this happiness; making Peace with God, and our Consciences, living peaceably, and from a sense of Christian Love and Charity, endeavouring to reconcile disagreeing Neighbours, and instilling this reconciling Principle into others.

And having thus laid down the true Characters of these Peace-makers, whereby you may examine your selves, let's go on, and,

II. Enquire into the reasons of the supposition, or that which is implied here, that those who have an aversion from this Peace-making, cannot be blessed or happy.

The reasons are,

I. Selfishness is plainly predominant in such persons, and that's no good character of bliss, so far from it, that the Apostle reckons it among the Plagues of the last days, *1 Tim. III. 1, 2. This know also, that in the last days perillous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of themselves.* It's true, to love our selves is a natural principle, but to love our selves so as not to be concerned for the good of others, is a sinfull self-love, which renders us contemptible to God, and despicable to rational men. He that matters not whether his Neighbours

bours fight or agree, whether they live in love or wrath, and sees a fire kindled in their Breasts, a fire lighted by the Flames of Hell, a fire which breaks forth, and threatens to lay their Consciences wast, and doth not offer his helping hand to quench it, hath a Soul base and low, a poor pitifull Spirit, guilty enough to suffer in Hell, but alienated from that life which must give him a title to Heaven.

2. He that doth not make Peace with God or with his own Conscience, and cares not for it, robs himself of the greatest comfort; and surely that man can never be happy. To be at Peace with God, is to be at Peace with our Judge, with him who hath the same power over us, that the Potter hath over his Clay, and is able to destroy both Soul and Body into Hell; with him whose voice breaks the Cedars, divides the Flames of Fire, shakes the Wilderness, and makes the Mountains tremble, and who hath a Prison to tame men in, a Prison from whence there is no coming out till they have paid the uttermost Farthing. To be at Peace with this Almighty and Sovereign Being, must needs be a mighty satisfaction to the Soul that knows what God is, and looks beyond this world: To enjoy his Friendship, to be sure of his Favour, to be secured of his good will, this establishes the Soul, and gives her courage
in

in the time of the greatest Danger. He that is indifferent, whether he be at Peace with God or not, not to mention that he is a Sot and a Fool, and understands not his true interest, he deprives himself of that which ought to be the greatest stay and staff of his life, and therefore whatever his outward Conveniencies, and Accommodations may be, he is unhappy.

3. He that doth not or will not live peaceably with his Neighbours, I need not tell you that he is unhappy, for he himself finds by sad experience, that he is so. The Disorders and Tumults he finds within, the uneasiness of his condition, the danger he is in from without, and the vexation and discontent he runs into are sufficient Items that he is as far from being happy, as he is from being wise: *His lusts war within his members*, as St. James speaks, *Jam. IV. 1.* His Soul is *like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest*, Isa. LVII. 20. He is no kin to God, for he is *the God of Peace*, Rom. XVI. 20. No kin to Angels, for they *rejoyce in Peace on Earth*, Luk. II. 14: No kin to good men, for they *seek Peace and ensue it*, 1 Pet. III. 11. If he be related to any thing, it is to the Prince of Darkness, who delights in *wrath and envy*, Rev. XII. 17.

4. Such men are no Children of God, and therefore cannot be blessed; that's the argument

argument of the Text, *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God*; therefore those that have an aversion from this Peace-making are not blessed, because no Children of God; surely no Children of God, when so much of that Spirit reigns in them, which rules in the Children of Disobedience: He particularly that seeks not to be at Peace, or to live peaceably with his Neighbour, most certainly doth not love his Brother, and he that loves him not, is by the Holy Ghost in Scripture put into the number of strange Children, for so we read, 1 Joh. III. 10. *Herein the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: he that works not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his Brother.* Not to love our Brother, and to hate him in Scripture are equivalent, different expressions for the same sin; and if any man say, *I am in the light, and hate his Brother, he is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness hath blinded his Eyes,* 1 Joh. II. 11.

So that true Blessedness lies altogether in the opposite temper, viz. the Peace-makers, and of these it is that it's said, *They shall be called the Children of God*; and how, and upon what account they shall be called the Children of God, is the

III. And last particular, I am to speak to.

And here I must premise, that in Scripture Language, to be called so, is very often as much as to be so; *And thou Child shalt be called the Prophet of the most High*, i. e. thou shalt be a Prophet, *Luk. I. 76.* and after the same manner, *That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God*, i. e. shall be the Son of God; so *Matth. I. 23.* *They shall call his name Emmanuel*, i. e. he shall be so, God with us, God and Man. And after this stile, you are to understand the Phrase of the Text, *They shall be called the Children of God*, i. e. they are and shall be so.

Children of God! Why? What great blessedness is there in this title, beyond what other men enjoy? Are not Princes and great Men, who are commonly none of the best, called the *Children of God*, *Psal. LXXXII. 6.* and is not God the Father of all mankind? It is very true, but still there is a very great difference between Children and Children. All rational creatures, both Men and Angels, are God's Children, as they are the works of his hands, and with this respect, even Devils come into that number, because they owe their Being to an Omnipotent God. Princes and great Men particularly are the Children of God upon the account of Power and Grandure, and Authority God communicates to them,
but

but for all these respects, they may be everlastingly miserable. To be a Child of God by Regeneration, to be born again, to be born of God, to be begotten again through a lively hope, by the Word and Spirit, this is it that makes the title truly comfortable, and such Children are the Peace-makers commended here. To be a Child of God in this sense, is more, and a greater honour, than to be related to all the greatest Princes in the World. For,

1. Such Children of God have higher marks of favour set upon them. They enjoy the Blessings of God's left hand in common with the rest, but besides these, they have Blessings of the right hand heap'd upon them. Besides the Preservation, Protection, Provision for their bodies, and common Deliverances from dangers, they participate of with the greater number, their Souls are visited by very magnificent Guests; For if *any man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, saith our Saviour, *Joh. XIV. 23.* God governs them by his Spirit, and *feeds them like a Shepherd, gathers the lambs into his arms, carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young*, *Isa. XL. 11.* They are made partakers of the divine nature, love what God loves, hate what he hates, desire what he desires, and

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aim at the same end God himself aims at, to wit, the Glory of God, blessed for evermore.

2. To such Children of God belong the Promises of the everlasting Covenant; and there is no condemnation in them. They are deliver'd from the wrath to come, and Christ intercedes for them in Heaven. For them the balm of *Gilead* flows, and when their Souls are sick, Physick is administred to them from the Clouds. They are wash'd, they are justify'd, they are sanctify'd, and shall at last be glorify'd. To such power is given to tread on Serpents, and upon all the powers of darkness: For their sakes God spares whole Nations. To go no farther than our own: All sober men believe we are ripe for God to put in the Sickle of Vengeance. The Atheism, Profaneness and Hypocrisie, the dull Formality we are sunk into under the greatest encouragements, together with other crying Sins, which are among us, are enough to make a rational man wonder, that the Vials of the wrath of God are not yet poured out upon us, but it's for the Children of God's sake, who are among us, that we are spared thus long; for their sakes it is that God brings the strangest things about, and though they are try'd often by affliction, yet the Fire that proves them, doth only cleanse, not crush the Frame. To protect them,

them, God sends his own Guard, a Troop of Angels to surround their persons and habitations; and if so, the blessedness of such must infinitely exceed the happiness of those, who are called Children of God, upon the account either of their Creation, or Power and Authority.

But to come closer to the words, the Peace-makers are in a very special manner the Children of God, if you consider them either with respect to this life, or with regard to that to come, for to both these states, as I have told you often, does the recompences mentioned in these Beatitudes relate.

As to this present life.

1. They are Children of God, because they are like him. They express his Nature in their own: For God is *the God of Peace*, Philip. IV. 9. His Divine Essence is the true Pattern of Peace and Order. The ever-blessed Trinity is the grand Exemplar of Concord and Unity. It's God *that makes Peace within thy Borders*, saith David, Psal. CXLVII. 14. He *speaks Peace to his people*, Ps. LXXXV. 8. He *creates Peace*, Isa. LVII. 19. And *calls to Peace*, 1 Cor. VII. 15. And *is the Author of Peace*, 1 Cor. XIV. 33. And *is the Lord of Peace*, 2 Thess. III. 16. The peaceable, and such as are of a peaceable Temper, resemble this God of Peace; He lives in them: There is a great

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similitude betwixt that inexhausted Spring, and these little Rivulets ; a great Conformity betwixt these Copies, and that Original. The features and lineaments of Peace, that appear upon their Souls, discover that they are the Children of God.

2. They are the adopted Children of God in Christ Jesus. Christ is the true, natural, and only begotten Son of God. The peaceable, and such as are of a peace-making Temper, tread in the Steps of Christ, imitate his peaceable Nature, and upon that Account are admitted to the Honour of his Filiation, and Son-ship. The Spirit of Peace, which dwelt in Christ Jesus, dwells in them, *Col. III. 15*. Christ is the Prince of Peace, so he is call'd, *Isa. IX. 6*. Nay he is our Peace, who made both one, and pull'd down the middle Wall of Partition between us, having abolish'd in his Flesh, the Enmity, even the Law of Commandments, contain'd in Ordinances, making in himself of twain, one new Man, so making Peace, *Eph. II. 14, 15*. *And he came and preach'd Peace to them that were a far off, and to them who are nigh, vers. 17*. He is the great Peace-maker, who made Peace betwixt Heaven and Earth, which makes the Angels sing at his Nativity ; *Glory be to God on high, and on Earth Peace, Luk. II. 14*. Nor doth Christ's Saying, *Matth. X. 34*. *Think not that I am come to send Peace upon Earth,*

Earth, I am not come to send Peace, but a Sword. I am come to set a Man at variance against his Father, and the Daughter against the Mother, &c. I say, this Oracle doth not at all invalidate, or weaken the Character, or Title given him, which is Prince of Peace; for in so saying, he only describes the natural Events and Consequences of his Gospel.

I. When a Man is truly converted to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, there is immediately infused into him a mighty hatred and indignation against sin, and vice, where-ever he meets with it, though it be in a Father, or Mother, or Brethren, or Sisters. To find it in such Relations, doth not make him like it the better, nor can all their persuasions make him have any good opinion of it; and therefore if the Father be carnal and wicked, he will hate his Son for being so holy and precise, and keeping such a stir about Religion; or if the Father be good, and the Son naught, the Son will be either secretly, or openly angry with his Father, for having so strait-lac'd a Conscience. Hence arise quarrels and dissensions, which are not the natural Effects of the Gospel, but of Men's vicious humours, which hate to be controll'd by the Gospel; and hither must be referr'd the Persecutions that befell the Primitive Believers, when they would not offer incense to the Heathen Gods, whereupon they were impris-

son'd, harras'd, persecuted with Fire and Sword. The Son rose against his Father, if he were a Christian, and the Daughter did her best to throw the believing Mother into the Fire, and the nearest Relations became mortal Enemies one to another; not that Christianity made the Christians hate their Heathen Relations, but it made the Heathen Relations hate their Christian Kindred.

2. This Christ speaks with relation to those Carnal and Hypocritical Professours of his Religion, who in After-ages pusht on by Pride and by the Devil under a pretence of Zeal for his Honour and Glory, would kill, butcher, burn, massacre thousands of their Brethren, who retain'd the Substantials of Christianity, only differ'd from them in things which Carnality, and Pomp, and Superstition, and Ambition to regulate the Church by the Court of Princes, should add to the ancient Faith deliver'd unto the Saints, and of this we have seen very sad instances: But still, these are only accidental Effects of Men's Pride and Passions, not the natural Products of the Design and Tendency of the Gospel; so that notwithstanding all these quarrels and dissensions ill Men raise about the Gospel, Christ is still the Prince of Peace, and the Peaceable, and such as are of a peace-making Temper, are upon that account
his

his Brethren, for *he is not ashamed to call them Brethren*, Heb. II. 11. and therefore the Children of God.

As to the Life to come.

These Peace-makers shall be, and shall be treated like darling Children of God. This St. *John* assures us of, 1 *John* III. 2. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when we shall appear we shall be like him. Like him! How? Like him in Eternal Glory and Honour, and Splendour. They were like Christ in their peace-making Temper here, and they shall be like him in a glorious Immortality. Their Father which is in Heaven will let Men and Angels see, that they are his Children, that they are so not in Name only, but in Deed. He will give the unbelieving World a visible Demonstration, that they are so in the last Day, in the great Day of Account; he will place them at Christ's Right-hand, and the Men that would not believe and repent, shall behold how dear they are to him; for the great Redeemer shall carry them up into his Father's Kingdom: *If Sons then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ*, saith the Apostle, Rom. VIII. 17. Christ as Man, and Mediator, became Heir of his Father's Royalty, and Power; so shall they in the right of adopted Children. As Christ a-

scended

scended into Heaven so shall they; as Christ was exalted so shall they; as Christ was enthron'd so shall they; as Christ was advanced from a low Estate to the highest Dignity so shall they; as Christ lives for ever so shall they; as Christ cannot be hurt by the second Death no more shall they; as Christ had power given him over the Nations, over Hell and Devils, so shall they reign over all their Enemies; as Christ shall judge the World, and the Apostate Angels so shall they; being Fellow-Sons, Fellow-Heirs, they all share in his Authority and Grandeur: It's true, all this must be believed, for it is not seen yet; but who can forbear to believe it, when we have the Word of the living God for it?

In a word, They shall be Possessours of Heaven and Earth; for not only their Father, but their Elder Brother is so. Crowns and Diadems are preparing for them; Crowns which fade not away, Crowns which the Moth cannot corrupt, nor Thieves break through and steal; Crowns made of Beams of Eternal Light; Crowns which not only adorn their Heads, but fill their Faces with incomparable Beauty; Crowns such as Angels wear; Crowns which cannot be viewed, cannot be thought of, without Eternal Admiration.

Inferences.

I. It is easie to guess what Tempers and Actions are contrary, and directly opposite to the admirable Qualification recommended, and commanded in the Text. Peace being either publick or private, and the publick either Political, or Ecclesiastical, either of Church or State; whoever they be that wilfully pusht on by Pride or Passion, or some worldly carnal Design, without a just, lawfull, or warrantable cause, disorder or disturb that Peace, cannot be true Disciples of Christ, because they have an Aversion from that peaceable, peace-keeping, and peace-making Temper, which Christ with all the pathetick Adjurations imaginabe hath enjoyn'd his Followers.

I shall not here reflect on secular Estates and Princes, who either begin or maintain an unjust War, either to enrich themselves by the Spoils of their Neighbours, or to advance their own Glory, or to enlarge their Empire and Dominion; for the very Light of Nature confutes these Practices, and he that is but a Novice in Religion, may see nothing is more contrary to the Design of the Gospel. However, I cannot but spend some considerations on the sad Divisions and Quarrels
that

that are among those who call themselves Christians upon the account of Religion.

I wonder not to see Mahometans and Jews scandaliz'd at these Divisions, the Jews especially, when they read such lofty Promises of the Peace and Unity of the Church that was to be under the Messiah, as *Isa. II. 4. They shall beat their Spears into Plough-shares, and their Swords into Pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more;* and *Isa. XI. 6. The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them.* Though these Prophecies have been in a great measure fulfill'd, not only in the Apostles times, when the Jews and Gentiles, who were mortal Enemies before united into one Church under their common Head Christ Jesus; but afterward when the Empire became Christian, and the Heathen Powers, who had most violently persecuted the Christians, submitted to the Gospel, and embraced those whom they had burnt before; and though these Prophecies may moreover be said to be exactly fulfilled, partly with respect to the Design and Tendency of the Christian Religion, the design and intent of Christ's Laws being to make Men peaceable, and partly with respect

spect to the signal change that's actually wrought upon those who are truly, not only in profession, and outwardly, but inwardly too, converted to the Faith of Christ; for upon this Conversion their former Hatred and Enmity to others is laid aside, and they are all for Peace and Concord; though I say these Prophecies are actually accomplish'd in despite of all the Sects, that profess Christ's Religion; yet the Jews, a dull, hard, inconsiderate sort of People, and who are guided much by their Senses; seeing the everlasting quarrels that are among Christians, and how one party persecutes and abuses the other, and upon what slight occasions they quarrel and fall out, and break Peace and Communion one with another; I wonder not to see them offended at these doings, and harden'd in their Unbelief; for not to mention the Divisions, Heresies and Schisms in the ancient Church, at this day the Eastern Churches stand divided against the Western; the Western is broke into several Parties; the Church of *Rome* against the Protestants, and the Protestants against the Church of *Rome*, and the Protestants are divided among themselves.

In these Divisions the Church of *Rome* erects her head, and pretends she is the only true and Catholick Church, because they are united among themselves. But

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to shew the weakness of this boasting:

1. At this rate every particular Church must be the Catholick Church, because the Members of every particular Church are united among themselves. So in the Church of *England*, her Members and Pastors all subscribing to the Articles of her Communion, and professing the same Doctrine, Ceremonies and Worship, whether they be in *Europe*, or *Africa*, or *Asia*, or *America*; and there is no particular Church, that's constituted by any publick Authority, but may boast of this Unity.

2. It is not a bare Union of Men that makes a Church a true Church, but that Union must have Truth for its Foundation; else you know, Thieves, and Robbers, and High-way-men, and Pyrates, and Buccaneers, because they agree among themselves, might lay claim to this Title, and the most perverse Hereticks, because they agree in certain points, might say they are the true Church, and Heathens and Pagans, because they agree in Superstition, and in believing a Multitude of Gods, might bid fair for this character. However,

3. The Unity the Church of *Rome* boasts of, is only a pretence; for all the World knows the mighty differences that are within her own Bosom, of the *Scotists* and *Thomists*, of the *Franciscans* and *Dominicans*,

cans, of the *Jansenists* and *Jesuits*, who stick not to call one another Hereticks; not to mention the late Divisions betwixt the Disciples of *Molinos*, and their Opponents; and were it not for fear of Fire, and Prisons, and the Inquisition, some of these would break out into open War against their Adversaries and Competitors. Nay,

4. There is no Christian Church that hath been more guilty of breaking the Peace of *Christendom*, than the Church of *Rome*; and because several Churches would not satisfy or gratify her Ambition, would not put their Necks under her Yoke, nor believe the falsest and idlest thing in the World, her Supremacy and Infallibility, she hath boldly separated her self from their Communion; this was the reason why she separated from the Eastern Churches, and by this insolence she hath forced the Protestant Churches from her Communion, and not he that is forced away, but he that forces is the Schismatick.

And indeed, that which justifies the Protestant Churches separation from her, or breaking Peace and Communion with her, is

1. Because she would impose that upon the Consciences of Men, which Christ and his Apostles never imposed.

2. Because she hath turned the Spiritual Worship of the Gospel, into carnal
and

and mechanical Devotion, and introduced innumerable Superstitions, which have no foundation in the Word of God, and would have them believ'd as firmly as the Gospel it self.

3. Because she hath brought in a Worship, which with all the favourable Interpretations imaginable, cannot be excused from Idolatry; even the Worship of dead Men and Women, of the Bread in the Eucharist, of Images and Pictures, and Reliques, &c. contrary to the Design of the Gospel.

4. Because, though she hath been often entreated, admonished, and exhorted to reform these Abuses, for some hundred Years together, yet she is obstinate, and instead of reforming, hath harden'd her self in them, and thinks to hector Men by her Power and Authority into a Belief of that, which cannot be defended with solid Arguments.

5. Because rejecting the Supreme Authority of the Scriptures, which are the sole Rule of Faith, she hath made her pretended Head, and such Councils as he shall call, or approve of, the sole Dictators, and Expositors, of the Doctrine of Christ, requiring blind Obedience to their Decisions, contrary, not only to the Word of God, but to the Sense of all true Antiquity: So that there can be

no peace, I mean no Peace of Communion with *Rome*; for though we are commanded to live peaceably with all Men, yet we are withall to have a due regard to Truth, *Eph. IV. 15*. Nor must Peace be bought at so dear a Rate, as to comply with Men in their Sins and Errors, which is the Reason why Peace and Holiness are join'd together in that known Exhortation of the Apostle. *Follow peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. XII. 14*. Indeed an external Peace we are to maintain with all Mankind, but this differs much from Peace of Communion in Divine Worship and Sacraments.

The Divisions among Protestant Churches are to be deplored so much the more, because the Points they differ in are inconsiderable, and might easily be composed, if Men had but peaceable Tempers, and were resolved to lay aside Interest, and carnal Respects, and *Punctilio's* of Honour, and Credit, &c. for they all agree in Fundamentals, all are satisfied that the Church of *Rome* hath notoriously deviated from the simplicity of the Gospel; and the matters in difference, are things in which Salvation is

not concerned. And upon that account their labours deserve great Commendations, who heretofore, and very lately have endeavour'd to reconcile the Protestant Churches into a perfect Union: A blessed Work. *Blessed are the Peacemakers*, that endeavour to make Peace among the jarring Members of Christ's Body; and though they may fail of Success, yet they shall not lose their Reward.

In the mean while those who widen, or heighten these differences, and incite the respective Parties to hatred, and wrath, and animosities one against another, to be sure are no Children of the God of Peace, and had need at least before they die, make publick Satisfaction for the dreadfull Effects, their Heats and Passions do produce.

But as this Peace among Protestant Churches is very much to be wish'd and pray'd for, so I despair to see so glorious a Work take effect, except the differing Parties would resolve to stand to the Rules following.

I. That the respective Parties which agree in the chief Points of Religion do not make any of those Points they differ in, fundamental, as if the Fortune of Religion

ligion depended upon it, or as if those different Points were so many different Religions.°

2. That the differing Parties do not damn one another for those differences, there being nothing that hath done Religion more hurt, than Men's damning one another for things, which Christ and his Apostles have affixed no Damnation to.

3. That notwithstanding the little differences that are among them, they make one Church, and endeavour after the Welfare and Prosperity of it, and join together in publick Prayer, and in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is the Badge and Symbol of Fraternity, and Amity.

4. That one Party be not presently jealous, and suspicious of the other, as if the opinion which one Party espouses were embraced, or maintain'd in a Humour, or for worldly Ends, but that they charitably believe, it's Conscience, that puts them upon it, at least, till either the Party espousing that opinion confesses, that Conscience is not at the bottom of it, or that it appear by undeniable Evidences, that a worldly or sinister design is the foundation of it.

5. That the differing Parties do not multiply the controversies, which are amongst them, make them neither more numerous nor greater than really they are, and that they do not interpret an accidental unwary expression, that may drop from the Pen, or Mouth of one party, as a new controversy.

6. That one party do not charge the other with consequences, which they do not own, nor with Doctrines and Positions, which they detest from their hearts.

7. That each party defending, or proving their opinion do it with great modesty, without provoking or exasperating, or approbrious Language, and revilings, or bitter reflections on the other.

8. That of these differing parties none do vye with the other, except it be in living up to the Precepts of the Gospel, particularly those of patience, long-suffering and charity.

These rules I apprehend to be the foundation of Peace and Concord of Protestant Churches, that differ in points of no great concernment; and were these Maxims once put in practice, the particular controversies might soon be com-
pro-

promised. To this purpose is that saying of the Apostle: *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let's walk by the same rule, let's mind the same things; and if any be otherwise minded, God will even reveal that unto you, Phil. III. 15, 16.* But however,

II. If we cannot mend the Publick, let's endeavour to reform particular Persons. It is a sad sight to see Christians divided among themselves, but it is as dismal a spectacle to see so many of us at war with God. This I know will hardly be believed by the guilty, and because they do not blaspheme God, or do not trouble their heads much about God, or Religion, they know nothing to the contrary but that they are at peace with God, and that they and God are very good Friends. This is true stupidity, and were the stupidity invincible as it is in Beasts, such Men would be safe, safe as the wild As, or the Dromedary in the Wilderness, safe I say from the Danger of God's Wrath. But this cannot be the case of any of you, that live in a Country where the Gospel is preach'd, where you are told, that not to love God, is to hate him; and

that not to delight in his ways, is to incur his displeasure ; that to live in those sins, which exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven, is to bid defiance to him ; that to be neglectfull of his Will, is to wage war with him ; that to slight the admonitions, and entreaties of his Messengers, is to be at enmity with him ; and that to mind the World more than his Service, or to seek to please Men more than him, is to provoke him to anger.

And hath not this been the temper, and is not this the complexion of many of you ? How many years have some of you born Arms against God ? Your wilfull sins are the Weapons whereby you fight against him ; and though like the Giants in the Fable, you do not heap Mountain upon Mountain to pull him out of his Throne ; yet by espousing that life, which is odious to him, you affront his Sovereignty, and by living contrary to the Gospel, you despise and dishonour him who hath the greatest right to command you. And is it not high time to make peace with him ? If God be not at peace with you here, he will never be at peace with you hereafter. *What peace while the Whoredoms*
of

of thy Mother Jezabel, and her Witchcrafts are so many ? said *Jehu*, 2 Kings IX. 22. So here, what peace can there be betwixt God and you, while you continue in that pride and vanity, and intemperance, and other sins, against which the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven ? Do you think you are at peace with God, because you thrive and prosper in the World ? Do not the wickedest of Men do so, and is that an Argument that God is their Friend ? Will you make his patience a sign of his being reconciled to you, when it is only a motive to a reconciliation ? *There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked,* Isa. LVII. 20. Let them be never so potent, never so rich, never so wealthy, their impiety takes away all peace betwixt God and them. He hath declared so much, and will not you believe him ? Will you give no credit to his word, till with *Dives* you lift up your Eyes in Hell, and see that God is not your friend ? If you do thrive and prosper in the World, cannot those Blessings move you to be at peace with him ? Do you believe he is kind to you, and shall his kindness provoke you to be his Enemies ? Nothing can settle a peace betwixt God and you, till

you change your lives, and make conscience of your ways, and abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good. Then indeed were your sins as crimson they shall be as wool, were they of a scarlet Dye, they shall be as white as snow; but till then, your sin, like that of *Judah*, is written with a pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond, as it is said, *Jer. XVII. 1.* and you do as good as say to God with those Desperadoes, in *Job, Chap. XXI. 14.* *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* Till then you can never be at peace with your own consciences, carnal security you may have, but peace of conscience is another thing, for this can never be at rest, while it hath reason to believe God frowns upon it; but being sure of the light of his loving kindness, a Man walks in Paradise, and dwells in the Garden of God. But,

III. When Christ in the Text professes and declares how pleasing and acceptable a peaceable, and peace-making Temper is to God; would not one think that every one that believes the Gospel, should be ambitious of those qualifications, which God not only approves of,
but

but promises to reward with the highest Honour and Dignity? Yes, did Men love God indeed and in truth, they would not only be glad to know what is pleasing to him, but even run to do it, as good natured Children that observe their Father's temper, and endeavour to gain his love by a deportment and behaviour they know he delights in.

Peace among men God delights in, peace among Christians especially; to whom he hath vouchsafed a higher dispensation. Among these, no noise, no clamour, no railing, no quarrelling, no Swords, no Cannon should be heard; these profess themselves Disciples of Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace; and there is no command that is more strictly, or more frequently injoin'd, than that of Peace. This they are to pursue, to follow, and to endeavour after by all possible lawfull means. This is their livery, and the very mark whereby they are to be distinguish'd, even their peaceable Behaviour. This is the Salt which is to keep them sweet, as Christ calls it, *Mark IX. 10.* But you all know, how contrary to this character the generality of Men live, upon the least provocation they break the Peace, and all friendship

is renounced ; especially where they have a Purse to maintain the dispute ; many a Man that was humble and peaceable before, when poor ; no sooner doth he find his Purse swell, but his Temper alters ; and now if his Neighbour doth displease him, though there be no malice in the case, presently he talks high, and big, and he cares as little for his Neighbour, as his Neighbour doth for him. This is the humour of the Age, and instead of repenting of their heats, and divisions, they justify their contentions, and oppose the reasons of flesh and blood, and the circumstances of their birth and quality, of their honour and grandeur, to the laws of that Saviour, by whose Blood they say, they are redeemed. Strange Christians these that will be so, in despite of Christ, though they have nothing of the character in them. And let us but consider what trifles they are Men quarrel about, and how frivolous the things for which they break forth into flame, and fury, and break the Peace which they should maintain and keep, things, which a Philosopher would put by with a smile, and a wise Man think below himself to take notice of. But what shall we say ?
Till

Till men come to stand in awe of the Gospel, more than of the laws of the Land, and the threatnings and punishments of the Magistrate, thus it will be, and when opportunity serves will be carried away with the stream of their passions, and sinfull inclinations; and upon such I cannot hope to do any good, though the Arguments were never so convincing, or powerfull.

But if there be any here, as I hope there are several, that look upon this peaceable, and peace-making Temper as their duty, are perswaded that they are in danger of God's displeasure, if they want this qualification, and are concern'd about it, and desire to be inform'd of the way and method they are to take, how to compass it; to such I shall recommend these following Directions.

1. Be injurious to no man, wrong no man, defraud no man, oppress no man, speak evil of no man. This is the way to make peace, and to keep peace. It's the wrong that men apprehend is done to them by another, that causes quarrels and dissensions. Remove the cause, and you remove the effect, a remedy prescribed by the Apostle, in order

der to a quiet and peaceable Life, *Tit. III. 2.*

2. Love to do good. This strangely obliges, and wins, and charms, and moves even our Enemies to be at peace with us, and makes People desirous to live in friendship with us, and not only so, but hereby we weaken our quarrellsome disposition, and become more tractable, and gentle, and *heap coals of fire upon the heads of our Enemies*, i. e. melt them by kindness into a better nature, *Rom. XII. 20.*

3. Watch against selfishness, and covetousness, for it's greediness after profit, and an over fondness of our temporal Interest, that puts us into heats, if we are cross in it. Moderation in our desires after these outward things composes the mind, quiets the passions, and keeps the blood from boiling over. The Apostle therefore very much insists upon this Vertue, *1 Tim. VI. and Phil. IV. 5.*

4. Believe not every ill thing that is said of you, for we see daily how little credit is to be given to reports. A too easie belief of ill things said of us, is an instigation to break the peace, to harbour hatred, and secret grudges, and tempts to strangeness of behaviour, to revenge,
to

to moroseness, and watching opportunities to be even with the supposed offender; charity believes the best, 1 Cor. XIII. 7.

5. Be not ashamed to confess your faults, when it's evident you are in the wrong; an obstinate defence of a fault, is apt to make Persons, who take notice of it, angry and furious, because it argues a very ill temper of mind; whereas an ingenuous acknowledgment of our errors, reconciles and prevails with Persons of ingenuity to be friends with us, and that's the reason why St. James is so earnest for it, James V. 16.

6. Bear with infirmities in others, with such particularly, which appear to be invincible. I do not say, bear with wilfull sins, and habits of vice and folly, but with failings and imperfections, which cannot well be remedied; either when the understandings of your Neighbours are shallow, or not so quick as yours, or when their Wisdom and Sagacity doth not reach so far as yours, and this according to the Command of the Holy Ghost, Rom. XIV. 1.

7. For peace sake be content to recede sometimes from your own right: Where two parties are stiff, and neither will

will yield, or abate any thing of their demands, the quarrel must needs continue. But concessions and relinquishing part of our right prepares for peace, and so did the Father of the faithfull, to prevent dissensions betwixt him and *Lot*; though upon the account of seniority, it belong'd to him to determine where he should pitch his Tent, yet he leaves it to *Lot* to chuse, which part of the Country he would go to, *Gen. XIII. 8, 9.*

8. In order to promote peace in Families, *David's* method must be taken, *Psf. CI. 6. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithfull of the Land.*

One great means to promote, and preserve the publick Peace of the Nation, is to do our own business, to be followers of that which is good, to do our own duty, and not to speak evil of dignities; for it is written, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the Rulers of thy People.*

Consider after all how your Interest is bound up with this peaceable, and peace-making Temper; for as Christ says of a Kingdom divided against it self, that it cannot stand; so if by quarrels, and clamours, and dissensions, you divide the Society you live in, you undermine your own ease
and

and happiness. To this purpose Solomon, Prov. XVII. 1. *Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.* Besides, by this you avoid innumerable sins, such as ill language, odious names, envy, hatred, malice, and revengefull sins, and desires, and engaging other Men in sin with you, and doing mischief to men, &c.

But is not the Title in the Text, given to the peaceable, and peace-making Christian, enough to make you endeavour to attain to this Character? What? Children of God? And do you feel no desire to be so? Did you ever seriously examine the privileges which attend the Children of God, and are these no motives to you to come into the number? Suppose the Children of God are not much regarded here, but is there not a time coming, when they shall be honoured before the whole World? Is there not a life to come, which shall manifest their Dignity, and their Glory? The Peace of Heaven shall fall to their share: Do not you reflect sometimes on that Peace, which the Children of the everlasting Kingdom shall enjoy? Or is that Peace so inconsiderable, that it deserves no consideration? What is the future

ture felicity, but perfect Peace, everlasting Peace, uninterrupted Peace? The peaceable Christian shall feel it, feed upon it, possess it, live upon it, peace with God, peace with the Prince of Peace, Christ Jesus, peace with all the Angels of God, peace with all the Spirits of Men made perfect. No war shall disturb it, no tumult discompose it, no sedition annoy it, no rebellion disfigure it. The God of Peace shall live in him, and he in the God of Peace; God will tell him that he is his friend, and one with him, and that no Men, no Devils shall pluck him out of his hands. There Rivers of Peace shall flow upon him, Rivers where no Wind doth blow, no Storms do come, no Tempests rise, no Hurricanes molest. I conclude with *St. Paul's* Obtestation, *Colos. III. 15.* *And let the Peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body: and be ye thankful.* Amen.

Nov: 10. 97.

Jan: 7. 98.

Mar: 2. 98.

F I N I S.



